

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 03395

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, NATO
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS NOMINATION FOR POST OF GENERAL
MANAGER, CENTRAL EUROPEAN OPERATING AGENCY (CEOA)

REF: USNATO 3248 DTG 301417Z MAR 78

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1. DUTCH DCM BUWALDA CALLED ON US APRIL 3 TO MAKE FORMAL
PITCH ON BEHALF OF DUTCH CANDIDATE HOFMAN FOR CEOA
MANAGER. BUWALDA NOTED FACT THAT HOFMAN HAD SPENT CLOSE
TO 10 YEARS ON ISSUES RELATED TO PIPELINE, WAS THUS
FAMILIAR WITH PIPELINE OPERATION, AND HAD GOOD MANAGERIAL
QUALITIES.

2. BUWALDA STRESSED THAT NETHERLANDS AND OTHER BENELUX
COUNTRIES WERE STRONGLY BEHIND DUTCH CANDIDATE. HE ARGUED
THAT BREAKING OF "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" WOULD HAVE SERIOUS
ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR STRUCTURE OF KEY CEOA ASSIGNMENTS
BY OPENING UP A "PANDORA'S BOX" OF NATIONAL INTERESTS.

3. AS A POINT OF CLARIFICATION, BUWALDA SAID DUTCH DID
NOT INTEND TO KEEP HOFMAN IN CEOA POSITION FOR
MORE THAN 5 YEARS. DUTCH RECOGNIZE, HE SAID, THAT IT
WOULD BE IMPROPER TO KEEP THEIR MAN IN PLACE BEYOND THAT
TIME.

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4. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR FROM DUTCH DEMARCHE THAT THEY
INTEND TO MAKE A REAL FIGHT FOR THIS POSITION, FOR WHICH
IN THEIR EYES THEY HAVE BEEN IN LINE FOR SOME TIME.
BENNETT

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